The AMERICAN SPECTATOR

A LITERARY NEWSPAPER

Vol. III. No. 30 ★ JUNE, 1935 Price Ten Cents

EDITORIAL NOTE

THE *AMERICAN SPECTATOR* is no longer edited by its founders—George Jean Nathan, Ernest Boyd, Sherwood Anderson, James Branch Cabell, Eugene O'Neill.

Hereafter it will be anonymously edited because an editorial board hiding behind the cloak of anonymity can be more insidious. The former editors have been asked to contribute; former contributors have already sent in their material. But there is to be a considerable infusion of new blood from authors who sometimes go a year without a cocktail party and who get up long before noon.

WE PROMISE never to retire because of prosperity or boredom.

WE PROMISE to continue the task of burying the dead.

WE BELIEVE that the need to satirize, expose and run to earth is more urgent today than ever before in the history of *The American Spectator* or its spiritual ancestor, the old *American Mercury*—but we believe, too, that such destructiveness, amusing and audacious as it should remain, must be based on a concept of creative and constructive struggle against the increasingly reactionary forces around us.

WE PROMISE to print no poems by Theodore Dreiser.

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A PLEA FOR INDECENCY

by LOUIS PAUL

IN a morning paper there is a report of the trial of five filles de dépouiller of a New York burlesque house which is particularly interesting because it puts into language a piece of information about which I have always had an enduring curiosity. The charge against the girls was the pat, time-honored wheeze about "tending to corrupt the morals of youth and others." What is interesting was the definition which the prosecution applied to the charge. Pressed by a recurrent cycle of Presbyterian censorship in movies and manners, it seemed to me, as a lover of the American people pretty much as they are, that the prosecution finally owed us a definition. I've sat around for literal hours wondering about the precise metamorphosis a moral underwent when it became corrupt. Now I know. It was stated that the performance "aroused lecherous desires."

Here, anyway, was something to work upon, though not so much as one might wish. The phrase is still bound up in the vagueness which characterizes censorship. What, for instance, good readers, is a "lecherous" desire? A pitiful old man, in a German play called "The Blue Angel" conceives a terrible affection for a strip artist. Would that be lechery, by chance? Overcome, let us say, by a manifestation of the procreative urge, what rule is to be established in order to determine immoral desire? Is it the extra-marital? What shall we decide of bachelors? Merely dismiss the rude subject by asserting that bachelors should stay away from burlesques? I fear they would show their strength at the polls were such harsh measures adopted. Or is lechery merely the particular urge felt by policemen or vice society investigators viewing a burlesque queen doing a strip act? The point is worth making, for investigators are charging good citizens with their own type of naive vulgarity.

My complaint, however, is not particularly with the lecherousness of vice investigators, or with the ministers possessed of hypersensitive sexual equipment who libel and malign the

Walter Pitkin

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wholesome and virginal Miss West merely because, lover of humanity like myself, she is free with her invitations to visit her one day. Innuendo which assaults the moral reputation of a people is worth discussing at serious length. Categorically to brand a public work (not Miss West; I mean movies and burlesques and such) as indecent suggests an inevitable corollary: indecency is to be shunned, banned, and cauterized from the human mechanism. What I fail to understand, by my own simple processes of reason, is why indecency is to be shunned at all. I say "reason" in order to preclude charges of hedonism —a defensible and amusing enough approach in itself, but unfair to the vice crusaders and decency leagues. My point is that I have still to listen to a plausible argument against indecency.

Let us start where all things ought to start, with the very young. Premise of meddlers: fragile youth is to be protected from things obscene. They explain why only very vaguely. Is it because obscenity tends to corrupt, let us say, the morals of a 12-year-old boy or girl? This is to say, then, that it arouses "lecherous desire"? Oh, my God! What kind of children have they, please write and tell me. And if they don't mean that, then what right is theirs that they may suggest it?

It seems to me that in a matter as serious as the instant one, when indecency, one of the nation's major amusements, is being violently if implausibly attacked by a mad minority, that as noisy a defense must be aroused. Let idle pronouncement and questionable data be challenged. Give us one example of the fate they cry is in store for young lotharios palpitating before the lush and sinful Miss Harlow. Let the meddlers bring forth their horrible examples, their case histories, in order that reasonable proof may substantiate their careless accusations. Show us, damn it. Had Prohibition no power to demonstrate the error of their ways? Bad, bad people managed to get stewed regularly during the entire ridiculous hiatus. Hawthorne's lass wore the scarlet letter for love in Puritan New England. Youngsters will pet in the park whether burlesque shows are banned or not. Illegitimate children may, and have, gone far in the world. Love will still sometimes be where scowling clerics have not whispered their magic jargon, and pimps will still walk down the aisle of great cathedrals. You can't prevent it. Preventing it, however, isn't the point. The particular point which I insist should be shouted from the housetops is not whether Mae West is lewd, but a demand for definite proof of whether such lewdness ever sent anyone to a bagnio, and, if so, what of it? If you are bagnio material you probably wouldn't waste money on burlesques and movies, anyway. It's an insult that calls for choice of weapons even to suggest that a nation of virile Americans requires a tawdry aphrodisiac like strip shows and smirky talkies.

The horrible truth is, let us confess straightaway, that there is all too little indecency. Those of you who have barged up a Main street of an idle hour hunting for it will be happy, I know, to bear sorrowful witness and sing a hymn of common agreement. You have, being human, as you must be if you've read thus far, at one time or another in your life smirked at a fair damsel with the wild desperate hope that you'd come along at the precise moment that the gal was thinking of the voluptuous arms of some movie hero. You surely must have been stuck at least one night in your travels in Boston, Philadelphia, Baltimore! Surely one of you has bought a little square package from a furtive specimen who hurried away in ostensible dread of the constabulary only to discover with a sorry curse that the contents consisted of scenes of the town's public buildings. Certainly, if you possess a humanly inquisitive mind, which all cultured and sociable people have, you've bought a book in your youth with the title, "What All Young Wives Should Know," only to find that it had to do mostly with the precept that puffy omelettes should be made with light cream, and the motherly advice that broiled meats should be seasoned only after cooking. Yes, there is no doubt but that there is a dreadful dearth of civilized amusements. We are strangers to each other, and many a maiden who longed deeply for human companionship

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FUGUE

by WALDO FRANK

SYLVIA saw the plate of eggs in her hand. The electric light above her head leered in the plate in her hand. Beyond the window, she felt Eighth Avenue crass and childish like a drunken sailor. Sylvia put the plate before the customer. Her eyes were somewhat blinded by the light she had looked at. She did not see the man.

She stood aside, leaning against an empty table. She felt, in her thigh through the white apron (—it's clean) the marble top of the table. —Like a stone slab on a grave. The funny thought made her aware of herself; then it vanished as she saw the man. —Gee! He has on glad rags. And he ain't eatin' nothin'.

She leaned now carefully at ease. She was afloat in a warm current coming from herself, yet sensed as from him. She did not smell the greasy air of the eating joint. The sweet tide of her nerves kept tingling up as from the man with the glad rags, suffusing her body. All at once she was sleepy. —Gawd, it's late! Won't I never get used to this here night shift? Soon I'll be goin' home. It was the thought of going home, again and again home, that made her tired. —But one time (oh, if I could see it!) will be the last time. I'll be leavin' this dump forever. "Sure," she hears her farewells to the boss and the other girl, "we're goin' to git married." The last time, then, the subway, with its midnight jazz of iron and rouge and flesh. The last time, the little hall room beating, throbbing, like a buried body alive beneath the pavement. Sylvia blinked and looked again at the sobering naked bulb above her brow. She tossed her cropped, black head; she pressed both palms on her slim waist, and turned her body. She saw the man.

The man was looking at her with eyes that grew large like a close-up in the movies. —I am (my apron's clean) 'dark beauty' Peter said what skirt I wonder has that sap run off wid? My skin is soft this dirty air dont help it none I'm breathin' very quiet while he looks shouldn't I bind 'em it ain't the style to bind 'em if they allow it why should I care? it makes me feel so funny bindin' makes 'em fall they say they are too high . . . not if I breathe quiet. He was looking at her with those close-up eyes; in them a hunger that made her ache for joy.

She walked up to him, professional.

"Can I get you somethin' else, sir?"

— Something else? He did not answer her words. — There's nothing else. This is the end. He grew aware of her waiting

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The AMERICAN SPECTATOR

A LITERARY NEWSPAPER

Published by THE AMERICAN SPECTATOR PUBLISHING CORPORATION

C. H. FINGERHOOD, *President*

132 West 31st Street

New York, New York

Vol. III **No. 30**

The American Spectator is published on the twenty-fifth of each month and is circulated simultaneously in England, France, Germany, Austria and Italy. It is on sale on all the first-class trans-Atlantic steamships, and is on file in all American Embassies in Europe and elsewhere. Unsolicited manuscripts, save they be accompanied by fully stamped self-addressed envelopes will not be returned. All such manuscripts must be addressed to the Editors, not to individual editors.

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The price of single copies is 10 cents; annual subscription $1.00; Canadian subscriptions $1.50. Foreign subscriptions $2.00. Editorial and publishing offices, 132 West 31st Street, New York City. Printed in the United States of America.
Copyright, 1935, by The American Spectator Publishing Corporation.
Application for entry as second class matter at New York, N. Y., is pending.

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WHAT PRICE ANALYSIS?

by JOSEPH JASTROW

The days when Psychology boomed as a word to conjure with are past and the conjuring has lost magic or manna and turned to confusion. To protect animal creation from human prying, Anti-Vivisection Societies were formed which, like other prohibitionary movements, were noble in intention and wanting in wisdom. They confused inquisition with inquiry, a distinction worth retaining in considering psychic vivisection. By the same march of time, the protest against the crudities of psychoanalysis moved out of the expletive phase of "damn the whole business" to a more discerning and sympathetic, yet critical, appraisal. The camp of adherents became sufficiently diversified to include a small coterie of rational defenders along with the old and new guard of uninhibited disciples.

One may now inquire with the circumspection of maturity what price, what glory, what value there is in the practice of psychoanalysis and in the principles behind it. The appraisal is the more pertinent as the applications of "analysis" have extended far beyond theoretical psychology and therapeutics into every domain of thought. Literature and drama, and polite as well as impolite conversation, have become unintelligible without a partial immersion in its font.

The prejudice against becoming a guinea-pig is reasonable, though we are getting used to scientific intrusion into our private affairs, and reconciled in many a situation to being merely an impersonal "case." The orthodox psychoanalyst is as opposed to anaesthetics as to reserve in any form; he has become by choice the nudist among psychologists, yet the only clothed member in his colony of patients. He retains his protective vestments as the clergy their cloth, as the badge of authority and the symbol of superiority.

Strangely enough, the key-note of psychoanalytic dispensation, that is, its rationale, has escaped analysis; everything has been analyzed but analysis itself.

The principle upon which analysis is based is ancient and familiar. From medicine-man days onward, there has always been something to get out of one's system. Purging is a universal art which runs the gamut from cathartics to Hitlerian bullets in the back. It was by this device, variously ceremonied, that the Devil was given his due. Exorcism developed rituals and techniques confirmatory of human ingenuity when faith replaces reason. Psychoanalysis, being a Teutonic product, had available a vocabulary more didactic than aesthetic, and named the process *abreaction,* which is no more nor less than getting "it" out of your system by articulation. The "talking cure" was the first and modest name of the procedure. It involved the closed, confidential walls of the confessional; but whispering was replaced by loud speakers, with the further revelation that a complex was not a sin but a doom, deep dyed in sex. Reticence became an exploded virtue, and obscenity a grace of sophistication. It became fashionable for one "psyched" guinea-pig to expose his insides to another. It was no longer a question of "speaking of operations," but an exchange of analyses, a comparison of oedipuses, in sessions of solace paralleling the gossipy release of the Merry Wives of Reno who, while doing their time, are wont to trade marital experiences.

The only discussion of the preface to all analysis, that I know, is in a keen analytic essay by Schmalhausen, who asks and answers, "Is Consciousness Curative?" Since so much of neuroticism is excess of introversion, it seems a bit paradoxical that a prolonged immersion in the original deluge should cure. It is in fact substitution or reduction of one troubling burden of sicklied dreads and hampering mind-cuffs for another, rationalized and channeled into a strange version of original sin, forbidden fruit, infant polymorphous perversion, damnation, predestination and clinical salvation through evocation and dissolution of Ids, Egos and Super-egos. The analyst is not a new homeopathist, believing that like cures like, but reminds one of a veterinary who had a cure of *botts,* and so converted whatever his animal patients suffered from into a case of *botts.*

The therapeutic technique which, in however scant a sketch, must not be omitted, is that of transfer, by which the analyst in person becomes the living hat-rack or manikin on which to hang, with Platonic drapery, the distrait emotions. In this depersonalized yet still human erotic companioning, the possessed patient relives the original complexes with all their perversion and intensity, until the new spell—a scape-goat for the old—is set free. Presumably the busy analyst keeps a card catalogue to prevent confusing the stages

The Theatre Guild

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of his pseudo-amorous progress with Araminta and with Arabella, or does he develop a composite Don Juan and Pickwickian personality?

Continuing the consideration of whether and how consciousness is curative, by weighing the principles and observing the practice, I can come to no other conclusion than that generally and indiscriminately employed, it is not—least of all in the crude surgery of the average practitioner. "The psychoanalyst is using a method of exploring the mind that has unhappily within it the power to wreck that mind" is Schmalhausen's verdict, adding that liberation may as readily make one mad as free.

If there are any maladies of mind that need to be handled with gloves and anodyne, they are the dreads and obsessions, the compulsions and bewilderments of the psycho-neurotic victim, entangled in unwelcome cerebrations that grow out of temperamental liabilities —so brutally ignored by the analytic procedure—and out of environmental disharmonies which he is often as powerless to relieve as he is to put money into the bank and security into the lives of his all too trusting patients.

Psychic exploration of some sort, a psycho-diagnosis conducted with clinical tact and humane insight, is a contribution to psychiatry that was well on its way when the undulation of the Freudian and post-Freudian waves broke over the dykes which a knowing Mother Nature had provided for the safety of that inner life which, like humbler plants, sends its roots out of sight lest the growth wilt if rudely disturbed.

Disillusionment and an authentic facing of reality is the indispensable if hard way of all flesh, burdened as it is with a top-heavy emotionalism. The message of analysis to keep our unruly emotions in order is timely and welcome; as is the understanding that the values of civilization are rooted in the handling of emotions even more vitally than in the intelligent reconstruction that has changed the face of nature and the resources of material living. *Homo sapiens* may be an unwise vaunt of man, but the substitution of *homo Freudiens* is an unwiser designation.

The price of psychoanalysis is too heavy, its value too precarious, its abuse too ready, to be entrusted to any but a race of supermen and to few of them. If Lincoln is right in saying that no man is wise enough to have complete control of the life of another, the psychoanalyst is too commonly a rusher-in where sages tread cautiously. The wreckage caused by doctrinaire methods, feeble in logic and misled by fantasy, appears in the distorted views of sanity that are all too prevalent; their undue popularization has resulted in amateurish dabbling in holy things. To wrecked conceptions must be added the toll of wrecked lives by psychoanalytic malpractice.

I have no sympathy with a reactionary program. I fully concur that a forward outlook is the only promising path. It was inevitable that in our rapidly changing world we should reexamine our designs for living and question their validity in many respects. We were bound to become more analytic, more daringly researching than our forefathers. Even before the economic catastrophe that disclosed the sand under our foundations, the radical temper had asserted itself. The Freudian *bouleversement* seemed to fit in with the swift reconstruction we were compelled to undertake in times of stress and distraction when dictators and bold innovators made their appeal. It is to the credit of psychoanalysis that in the present long-enduring crisis, it focused a strong light on motives; to its discredit that it defeated its own valid purpose by so distorted a perspective of the motivation that sets and maintains the human scene. I believe more strongly than ever that sound psychology has an increasing mission in restoring and sustaining the sanity of mankind. It is my deep regret that the type of analysis that has usurped the privilege, should have so egregiously failed in its high mission.

SHOULD THE NORTH SECEDE?

by CHARLES COHEN

ADOLF HITLER, Herr Thyssen's own private Golem, is rumored to be keeping a scrapbook these days; but not all of its pages are devoted to the Blood Purge and other classical rituals revived toward a higher civilization. A large part of the volume is said to be consecrated to the Southern division of the United States of America and includes clippings concerning one Huey Long, mob lynchings, share-cropping and other monstrosities peculiar to the territory below the Mason-Dixon line.

Aside from the staggering number of unprintables, many such adjectives as "barbaric," "bloodthirsty" and "maniacal" have been unreservedly slung at Adolf and his régime. After reading American periodicals, however, the Fuehrer is reliably reported to feel that he is being made a sucker of by the boys whose forebears were supposed to have accepted a major reproof with the formal conclusion of the Civil War.

The North, naïvely imagining it had demonstrated the injustice of slavery and given the franchise to the Negro, after a period of quiescence during which it dreamed that universal civilizing influences might affect even such areas as Georgia and Mississippi, is writhing again in a confusion of acute embarrassment and pop-eyed incredulity. It longs to glare in humanitarian reproof at the demented revivalist of Teutonic world-superiority, but it pauses in serious hesitation lest the lovely Adolf glower back at Maryland and all points below.

For Hitler once promised the Fatherland a regeneration; work for all; Germany, without coöperation from any other nation, would take its place in the forefront of the Powers. And the gentleman from Louisiana, freely exuding vitriol and bombast, plans to make Every Man A King without help from any intruders. He is to take the millions from the unloved capitalists, against whom he rants so unconvincingly, and divide them so that each adult male can possess at least five thousand dollars. Huey has spoken to everybody he can find about all this, but the lads currently in possession of the cash do not yet seem to have been consulted. It is suspected that the money boys are vastly amused.

Hitler is busily engaged in a process of enforced labor, with attendant indignation from all observers. In the South it goes by the name of share-cropping, an outgrowth of the Civil War and a "solution" of putting the freeman to work. Now the whites have become slaves along with the Negroes. In states where cotton is plentiful the landlord supplies the land, tools and seed; the sharecropper supplies the mere labor and is supposed to receive half of the crop. But the landlord controls credit for food and clothing. And when the accounting is reckoned after the picking of the crop, the tenant farmers are unfailingly found to be in debt to the landlord.

Here you will find no initiative-crushing law against child-labor. The young ones, withdrawn from school, are privileged to form the majority of this country's proud illiterates.

Southern senators recently recoiled in nausea over an anti-lynching law, crying horror if the flower of drawling womanhood could not be guarded in the South's own impressive manner of dealing with rapists, particularly if it happens to be a Negro whom somebody didn't relish for his political outspokenness. As often as not, the case fails to reach court. When it does, as in the recent case of the young man who was hanged following a debate with his accuser just before the trap was let from under him, the hanging becomes a gala event. Thousands come from miles around to witness the enchanting spectacle. It is not infrequently announced a few days ahead in print.

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A Negro needs only to have an accusation leveled against him—and the punishment is as good as decided and executed. Only last month were the provincial officials of Alabama driven to admit to the Supreme Court of the land that no colored man or woman could have hoped to be on the jury that convicted the nine Scottsboro boys.

As a gigantic climax out of an Earl Carroll musical, Governor Talmadge of Georgia, fretting of late against the oppressive NRA, magnificently threatened to secede from the Union. It seems all too likely that he will convince Washington that Georgia wouldn't be missed.

Now there's an idea for the North. Shall we continue reeling, hiding, apologizing and blushing for the savagery and barbarism of the South? Let the North rid itself of this crushing burden of responsibility. Let us follow the example set by this very South.

Let the North secede.

This could surely be arranged with a minimum of dissent. Messrs. Long and Talmadge could serve as a committee of two to round up such States as feel they could do a better job of government by themselves. A really sharp boundary could be set between the two countries. The North would no longer have to explain such incredibilities as planted juries, share-the-wealth schemes and sadistic illegal hangings.

There remains only the problem of a flag for the joyously abandoned South. The replica of a five-thousand-dollar bill is suggested gratis. And the national anthem would, of course, be Huey's own inspiring ballad, "Every Man a King."

BATTLES OF THE CENTURY

Al Smith Against the Nudists
Charles R. Walgreen Against the University of Chicago

GUESS-CONDUCTORS

by DAVID EWEN

THE history of orchestral conducting has, in its comparatively short span, probably known more fashions than any other interpretative branch of the musical art. Louis Antoine Jullien—he who conducted with a jeweled baton, while wearing a pair of kid gloves—boasted of many imitators who would emulate his strange histrionics on the platform; the enormous fame of Safonov inspired a period of batonless conducting; and Hans von Bulow inaugurated an era of exaggerated and distorted interpretation. In recent years, however, a new fetish has been adopted by the orchestral conductor, which promises to be the most pernicious of all: it has become a style to direct entire programs from memory. As a result, the conductor who stands in front of a music-stand, referring to a printed score during the progress of a concert, is becoming more and more an obsolescent curiosity.

Conducting from memory is not entirely a present-day phenomenon. Gustav Mahler and Artur Nikisch occasionally directed familiar works without resorting to the printed page long before it became the universal fad. But, invariably, the event caused exclamations of surprise. When Hans von Bulow first heard Richard Strauss, what attracted him to the young composer-conductor was the fact that Strauss led his own work from memory; and when Artur Nikisch conducted a program of Liszt music without a score in front of him, the event was something of a sensation. Today, however, conducting from memory is no longer a curiosity. A conductor feels disgraced before the eyes of his public if he does not perform at least the classics from memory. And I know of one important manager who has openly refused to engage any guest-conductor for his orchestra who cannot accomplish this feat.

With one or two conductors whose phenomenal memories make the support of a printed score quite unnecessary (one thinks specifically of Arturo Toscanini), or in the case of conductors who have directed a work so frequently that it is indelibly impressed upon their minds, conducting scoreless remains an unaffected gesture. In such instances, it is an intelligent move for the conductor to dispense with the music, for he can then concentrate entirely upon his men. It is only when this practice becomes a universal fashion, to be utilized indiscriminately for works old and new, familiar and unfamiliar, that it becomes exceedingly dangerous.

The truth is that most conductors, who today appear week-in and week-out on platforms without the customary music-stand in front of them, are only vaguely familiar with all the markings of a score. For them to attempt to direct their men without the support of the music is a very stupid and futile gesture. Inaccurate performances, innumerable omissions of subtle nuances and effects designated in the music, but which elude the memory of the conductor, are the inevitable results of this form of conductorial exhibitionism.

Sloppiness and inaccuracies have become more and more frequent intruders into orchestral performances since this fad has set in among conductors. The guest-conductor has now become a guess-conductor. I remember hearing Bruno Walter conduct a passage from Richard Strauss' *Schlagobers* in four-quarter time when the score clearly designated five-quarter, confusing the players to such an extent that the entire section of the work was completely distorted in performance; and this accident would have been quite impossible if Walter were referring to a score during the performance. I also recall a performance of Stravinsky's *Sacre du Printemps* by Koussevitzky in which the conductor suffered a lapse of memory with the result that he was compelled to push his baton feebly for several minutes—during which time the balance of the orchestra collapsed into confusion—until he could bring back to mind the exact notation of the score. Such obvious ineptitude of conducting is, to be sure, not an everyday affair with conductors of the stature of Bruno Walter and Serge Koussevitzky. What has become more habitual, however—and what is even more lamentable—is the persistent disregard of subtle indications in the score for slight, but all-important accentuations, syncopations, rubatos, etc.

The severest sufferer of this fad—if we exclude the audience and the composition—is the young conductor who directs from memory because he feels that he must keep abreast of the times. In the process of recreating a work of art, there are so many details upon which a young conductor must focus his attention that it is regrettable for him to divert so much of his attention, energy and time to a task so exacting as committing complicated orchestral scores to memory. The mere mechanical effort of memorizing concert-length programs will prove to be so enormous that, in spite of himself, the young conductor will be apt to neglect the much more important job of studying scores for their artistic content. Besides, it stands to reason that at the concert proper the more attention the young conductor devotes to recalling to mind the notes of the work he is directing, the less concentration can he expend upon the fine points of carving and shaping his interpretation as the music pours from under his baton.

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LITTLE MAN, HOW MUCH?

by LAWRENCE VAIL

THE racket in the next room reminded me of the war. Poor Holgar, I thought. She's throwing the heavy furniture. Her nerves must be worse.

Holgar is my eldest daughter. My tallest. Six foot six in her socks.

"Poor child," said my wife. "He's thrown her over again. She's very upset."

"Thrown her!" I cried. "I rejoice Holgar has found a man who can stand up to her."

"He cannot," said my wife. "Holgar knocked him down, picked him up by the collar, shook him and bit his ear. Mr. Smoodles went off in a huff."

"Ah, the vicar. But why must Holgar pick on a man half her size?"

"She suffers," said my wife. "Since she was twenty, last April, she's grown another inch. Holgar should see a serious doctor . . ."

Next morning Holgar and I caught the 9:10 to town. Presently, as I read the paper, I had an idea:

"This Carnera fellow looks to me a fine upstanding man."

I showed Holgar the picture in the "Illustrated News." She shuddered. "He's too horrible, father. I loathe uncouth brutes."

I nudged her great flank. "Don't you think you could come to care for a tall, strong he-man? I have nothing against Smoodles, but he's not quite worthy of my little girl . . . ."

Her good brown eyes filled with tears. "Father, I beg of you. I know I could never care for any other man."

"That's calf love," I said. Suddenly I got angry. "In any case, I refuse my consent."

Her mouth trembled. "Oh, father," she besought me, "don't take it like that. Josiah is getting used to me. It's only because I've been growing lately that he's a bit afraid. But surely those doctors in London will be able to stop that."

* * * *

"Let me see," said Sir Artemus. "Does Miss Mudget smoke?"

I shook my head. The well-dressed physician said:

"I take it you know that the theory that tobacco retards growth was refuted in 1908 by that eminent German experimentalist, the late Professor Hans Druck. Since that time, however, under the bridge of medicine much water has flowed: I mean that Druck's brilliant refutation has been discredited by the Scotch Board of Health. Of course, as a child your daughter should never have been forbidden to pick up cigarette butts and suck her father's pipe. But we must not give up hope. That would never do."

He sat before his desk and wrote a few illegible words in a small neat hand. "Nothing drastic, Miss Mudget. You will smoke three long black cigars before each of the two principal meals."

Holgar turned very pale. "Father, I couldn't. Josiah has sensitive adenoids. He can't bear smoky rooms. I am sure he would never marry a girl with tobacco breath."

"Couldn't you," I said to Sir Artemus, "suggest something else?"

"I wish you good morning," said Sir Artemus. "Yes, eleven guineas. Thank you. And, incidentally, it is possible Miss Mudget will shorten after change of life. A certain shrinkage and wizzening is apt to take place ten or twelve years after that date."

I dared not look at Holgar as we went out. "He's not the only doctor in Harley Street," I said. "Let's try next door."

Dr. Isadore Cohen reminded me of an Armenian conjurer I had known in a Swiss hotel. His hands never stopped twitching. He was sallow and lean.

"Exactly," he said. "You have a humility obsession because the young lady with whom you keep company is unusually tall."

"Excuse me," I said, "but I am quite well. But my daughter . . . ."

"Precisely. Your daughter has a Goliath complex. She bullies the household. She fills the house with lusty fellows. Your life is hell."

"It's not quite that," I said. "She feels clumsy, conspicuous—oh, I assure you we have done our best! My wife, my three younger daughters, even the butler, always go about the house with high-heeled shoes."

Dr. Cohen frowned. "Inadequate," he said.

"Perhaps," I suggested, "we might learn to wear stilts."

"I couldn't bear it," said Holgar, tears dimming her eyes. "And poor mother. It would be too cruel with her varicose veins."

"Let's leave mother out of it," I said. "It won't matter so much if she's the only short person in the house. As for me and the girls, I'm sure we would enjoy the elevation after a few days."

Holgar shuddered.

"Ah, the shudder," said Dr. Cohen. "That indicates frigidity. A virgin, I take it. Exactly, must be operated. Immediately. Frequently. Congenially, if possible. Miss Mudget must go the pace."

Without a word Holgar snatched her coat and made for the street.

"Father," she cried, "I'm not fit to live! You must shut me up somewhere. In a sanitorium, in a madhouse!" She shook hysterically. "Oh, I'm sure there are no strait jackets made for my size!"

"Don't be silly," I said. Suddenly a sign— *Dr. Jenkins, Osteopath,* —caught my alert eye. The exercise, I thought, will quiet her nerves.

The moment I saw Dr. Jenkins I knew we had come to the right place. He was a tremendous fellow. He came up to Holgar's chin.

"Sure," he said jovially. "'Course the little lady can be bullied down." He removed his coat. A ballet dancer, which stretched when he swelled out his muscles, was tattooed on his arm. "Come along," he said to Holgar. "I'm ready. Strip."

"Think of Josiah," I said to her. "You're doing it for him."

At last she consented, but I must leave the room. Finally, Dr. Jenkins joined me in the outer office. His face was wet and pale.

He poured himself a whisky. "I'll have my assistant with me next time you call. Two are better than one for this sort of job."

I made an appointment for the following week. "I hope he was not too rough on you," I said to Holgar as we descended the steps.

She trembled. "It was horrid, father. He tickled me horribly."

We caught the 4:15. Suddenly, as we walked into our cottage, I felt her strong hand grip my arm. "Father," she said, "I've struck my head."

"That's nothing," I said. "A little cold water . . . ."

"But, father, I didn't hit my head here this morning when we went out. That osteopath has elongated me. Oh, I wish I were dead!"

I looked at her. She did seem very tall. "Stand right there," I said. "Yes, inside the door where you hit your head. I don't think you're growing. It's only a bump. Still, if you are growing, the top of the door will hold you down. Meanwhile, I'll fetch Smoodles. Those banns must be published before you grow out of the house."

* * * *

I found Smoodles in the garden watering his peas. "Good evening," I said. "My uncle has sent me a pheasant. You must join us."

The little vicar peered up at me. I noticed a patch of pink plaster on his large sharp ear. "Mr. Mudget," he said "I am not feeling well."

I took him by the arm. "You don't look well," I said. "I propose we make a small detour and stop at the 'Egg and Shell'."

"I never . . . ." said Smoodles.

"My dear vicar," I said, "God forbid I should urge you, but you don't look at all well. Now a brisk walk and a dash of bitters . . . ."

It was a pleasant enough dinner until the dessert. Holgar and Smoodles hardly contributed to the conversation, but then they were in love. On the other hand, my younger daughters, Jack Porter and

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Miss Tombs kept up a merry flow. Then, we had just finished the pheasant, Molly made the first break. She said to Jack Porter: "Have you read 'So Big'?"

My wife's attempt to change the conversation was not a success. "Mr. Smoodles. I've just re-read 'Little Men' and 'Little Women' for the fifth time. I thoroughly enjoyed myself. They're lovely books."

I glanced over at Holgar: as usual, my eldest daughter was stooping over her plate. Ah, I thought, that osteopath was helpful: she's too worn out to pay attention to what is being said. Then, suddenly, she raised her head and smiled over at me. Such a sad, courageous smile.

" 'Little Women'," said the vicar. "Yes, I read it when I was a lad. A delightful book, Mrs. Mudget, and . . . ."

"My dear Smoodles," I cried desperately, "ever heard the story about the . . . about the . . . the story about the egg?"

He looked at me with small, polite eyes. "No, Mr. Mudget, I can't say I have."

"Too bad," I said.

The only one to laugh was the young one-toothed maid, Susan—she all but spilt the sauce down Miss Tombs' low neck. My wife, for I seldom ask riddles, gave me a puzzled glance.

"Talking of little men," said Miss Tombs, "I'm convinced I saw one today. They only venture forth into the open when there's a west wind and a waning moon. He was the cunningest little chap, with a green jacket and a russet cap. It was in Bishop's Wood, close to the Druid's stone. One expects to see anything in a place like that."

"I don't believe it," said Molly. "That's as ridiculous as a story I heard in the village this afternoon. Mrs. Mulligan, the apothecary's wife, swore to me she had seen a giantess in Fancy Lane."

"It must have been me," said Holgar, and her voice was very quiet. "I walked down Fancy Lane shortly after dark."

At last Polly broke the silence. "Jack," she said to young Porter, "been fishing today?"

He nodded. "I caught a three-pound trout."

I addressed the vicar. "Do you ever fish?"

"There's a friend of mine," said young Porter, "who manages to fish all year round. He follows the horse-mackerel. He's in Labrador now. Had a postal from him yesterday. Seems he caught a monster. Weighed half a ton."

"Those big fish," said the vicar, "I've been told they have no flavour." Suddenly, the first time that evening, he made bold to address his fiancée. "The smaller the fish, Miss Holgar, the more tasty the meat. It's like roses. Those large Argentine beauties are quite lacking in scent."

His face was very flushed. "It would seem," he continued, "that in Nature size cannot be achieved without a certain loss. Take the animal kingdom: you don't find the same intelligence in the giraffe as in the ape. In the same way the ostrich . . . "

Suddenly, an impressive spectacle, Holgar rose to her feet. For a moment she stood there, shaking, her face the colour of smoked salmon, her eyes filling with tears. Then, sobbing violently, she left the room.

Polly glared at the vicar. "You've gone and done it now. Talking of the giraffe's low intelligence. . . . "

A door slammed upstairs. "Oh, go after her!" cried my wife. "I'm so terrified she'll hurt herself. She's very strong."

Mr. Smoodles looked bewildered. "Yes, I know," he said. Then, appealing to Polly: "Do you really think, Miss Polly . . . ?"

"Leave Polly alone," I said. "She's only small fry. Go and do your duty, sir. Have a glass of rum."

It was then that through the open window we heard a thud followed by a cry. I ran to the garden. Fortunately Holgar had fallen on the flower-bed. She was alive.

* * * *

The surgeon from London said: "Triple fracture of the right leg. Quadruple fracture of the left. But unless morbid flux sets in we won't have to amputate."

"Poor Holgar," I said. "My poor little girl."

"I doubt it will be necessary to amputate both legs. I expect the right one will set properly though the muscles below the knee-cap have been considerably stretched. Yes, there's been elongation. Your daughter will be about an inch and a half taller than she was before."

"She could never bear it!" I cried. "I know my child. Better operate, doctor. We've always been very susceptible in the family to morbid flux."

The surgeon eyed me coldly. "There is no reason to operate now."

"But you could operate?" I cried. "I mean, you know how?"

"Sir," he said, "I have amputated as many as thirty-six legs on the field of action in a single day."

But I was not satisfied. Suppose, I thought, I ring up Sir Montague Phelps. He dotes on cutting out things. The sort of surgeon who would behead a man because he had the mumps.

Sir Montague promised to come by the next train. I then called up Smoodles. "It's Mudget," I said. "Ringing up from the hospital. Surgeon says Holgar will live."

"Oh," answered Smoodles. "I am glad to hear that."

"She may have to be amputated," I said. "That's why I rang up."

"Dear me," said Smoodles, "how dreadful!" His voice did sound sincere.

"My dear vicar," I said, "I seem to recollect you were somewhat deranged by my daughter's size. Oh, don't deny it! I understand perfectly—felt that way myself. Still, as she may be operated, I thought it only fair to let you know. I mean, just how tall would you like her? If they amputate above the knee, she would be a nice, cozy little girl, just about your size."

The Editors wish to point out the tremendous box office appeal of a wrestling bout between President Nicholas Murray Butler of Columbia and President Frederick Robinson of C. C. N. Y.

We also suggest that in this contest Dr. Robinson be permitted to enter the arena swinging an umbrella, and that Professor Butler be permitted to swing Raymond Moley.

WESTWARD THE COURSE OF EMPIRE

by EMANUEL EISENBERG

AT least four times a year the gentle Sabbath drone of the metropolitan newspapers' theatrical departments rises impressively to a high stertorous breathing—and it appears that one of the high priests of Times Square who hover frettingly over play-production for a so-called living has taken stylus in hand to deliver himself of a grievance.

The lament varies only in degree and range, never in values or approach. And this is its composite burden: When will Hollywood cease to exercise its horrible attraction for the countless artists of the drama now prisoned there? How can the sensitive actor, the understanding director and the imaginative author remain so blatantly and lengthily interested in the sheer financial rewards there when there is clearly no hope of artistic satisfaction? And what is the stricken New York producer to do when he finds a beautiful

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manuscript (a rarity in itself, with all playwrights shamefully rooted in the golden soil of the city of the angels), how shall he lure the needed performers away from the West Coast, when they have permitted themselves to be bound by relentless contracts on the one hand and been spoiled into demanding outrageously unreasonable fees for services on the other hand?

Readers of these asthmatic jeremiads are invariably startled and touched by their points, even soaring intermittently to a respectable peak of indignation at people so crassly commercial and unconcerned with the future of dramatic art as to shift to Hollywood in the first place and then entrench there once welcomed, ever so faintly.

To the date of pirouetting to press, no one has had the monstrous irreverence and calculated audacity to sidle up to these soulful shepherds of Manhattan's thespian pastures and whisper the foul suggestion that maybe the wholesale desertion of New York's theatres has been utterly justified in the main; that the army of renegades might very well serve the cause of dramatic art far better by continuing to function in Los Angeles; that the migration to the West Coast seems scheduled to grow even thicker than now in the months and years to come.

It is the intention of this brief article to whisper all of these suggestions with hoarse but vigorous insistence.

For as long a period as we can go back to in the search for appreciable documentation of production data, which is to say as far back as the earliest Italian commedia dell' arte, the theatre has been proudly distinguished for its sheer irresponsibility and anarchy in the department of presentation. To be associated with the theatre you had to demonstrate, almost under legal affidavit, that you were in some way swollen with the divine afflatus, totally removed from concern with the "humdrum" things of the world, delightfully demented, ready to put up with the most unsettling and humiliating conditions of daily living in the name of inalterable devotion to art.

That this concept should have flourished in the 17th and 18th centuries is comprehensible and pardonable enough, since all practitioners of the arts were then cheerfully assumed to be fascinating madmen forever divorced from the general obligations of society as well as the more intimate obligations of individual relationships. Art was a form of possession and obsession; in its name you committed every possible violence on the body politic or else the authenticity of your affliction was suspect. Exceptionally irrational behavior and fantastic conditions of work among associates of the theatre, which is the art that excites the most general and immediate kind of stimulation, were accordingly practically axiomatic.

It was about the middle of the last century, in a post-Hegelian world of scientific materialism, that artists as a whole came out of the long, long session of self-indulgence and sterilizing isolation to admit that they were particular members of an interrelative society whose function happened to be creative art. As such they were inevitable participants in all diurnal affairs that touched the world they clearly lived in. But did the lads and lasses of the theatre join them in this revivifying descent to earth? Don't be silly. In prompt contradiction they saw it as a richer holiday than ever for the display of idiotic waste, incredible inefficiency, conscious bohemian erraticness and sheer destructive irresponsibility.

And the public applauded. Even today so conservative and clear-headed a critic as Brooks Atkinson reveals his basis of attachment to the theatre as a charmed preoccupation with the unpredictable vagaries of the people inside of it. They're all a little cracked and that makes for magic.

Well, bamboozled audiences may continue to adore the mad, the freakish and the non-sensible in the theatre; and wide-eyed romantic critics may go on approving the thaumaturgic something-out-of-nothing which explodes on Broadway at dishearteningly spasmodic intervals; but you can't fool the awakened workers in the theatre any more. People who know that the composition of plays is a complex job which takes sober and consistent concentration; that characterization of a role is something which can be carefully mapped out and sedulously worked on; that directing and costuming and scene-designing are combinations of art and craft which can be academically studied and then executed with technical thoroughness, — all these people have rebelled against the mushroom creativity of the Times Square production, the reading of manuscripts by desperately guessing incompetents, the sudden hysterical drives for adequate production funds, the gathering of an unrelated acting company from nowhere and anywhere, the nerve-wracking fret and uncertainty of the rehearsal period, the crazy hurling of the presentation onto a platform in an auditorium the nightly filling of which has been completely unplanned and left to the whims of itinerant audiences. The rebels have gone to a place where the theatre is organized, where it is understood as one of the controllable and reasonable departments of the regular work of the world, where people with training and talent in the different theatre arts are employed with a sureness and frequency and efficiency which improves one's own skill and effectiveness immeasurably.

It is undeniable that the first interest in Hollywood, the first reason for going there, is the pay. But what better instinct could any worker follow than the one that leads him to steady gainful employment? The accusation that theatre workers who go West soon relinquish most of their ability is preposterous and undemonstrable. The screen is quick to betray many of those whose skimpy qualities the stage has been amiable enough to adorn with a temporary cloak of protection. Far more frequently the screen is inclined to give the fullest possible play to talents in writing and directing and acting which the stage, by nature of its anarchistic and accidental functioning, has revealed very vaguely. In a measure this is due to cinema as a medium; but for the greater part the explanation lies in the order and organization of Hollywood.

That Broadway manifests no striving toward controlled and efficient operation would be too sweeping a generalization, since it can boast (if it chose, which it wouldn't) of such anti-Broadway elements in its own midst as the Theatre Guild, the Civic Repertory Theatre, the Group Theatre, the Theatre Union and the imminent Theatre Alliance. All of these aggregations stand against the theatre as glamor, madness, unpredictability and spasmodic employment; they all believe in elaborate advance planning and direct control of known audiences. But the first has relaxed into safe respectability; the second has all but abandoned its original ideals and has disappeared of late; the fourth is constantly threatening to go under because of incomplete public support; and the fifth is still no more than a promise for next season. The Group is the only organization constructed as soundly and competently as Hollywood. Its current successfulness is highly impressive.

But until the New York theatre is entirely established on such a basis (ignoring for the moment the equal necessity for decentralization of the drama), so long will actors and playwrights and directors follow the westward trail—and so long will the diehard bohemians and anarchists of Times Square send forth their coyote wails of loneliness.

REVELATIONS XXI. 1

New York, April 22, 1935.

"Everybody knows that I am an anti-capitalist."

Dreiser

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FOR WHITE MEN ONLY

by JAMES T. FARRELL

"BOY, I tell you, don' you go there," Booker Jones, a small and yellowish negro, said.

"Booker, there is no white man alive who's gonna tell me where I is to go swimming, and where I isn't. If I wants to go swimming this lake here at Jackson Park, that's where I'm going swimming," Alfred, a tall and handsome broad-shouldered and coppery negro replied.

They were shirtless, wearing blue swimming suits under old trousers, and they walked eastward along Fifty-Seventh Street.

"Oh, come on Alfred, let's go to Thirty-Ninth Street," Booker said with intended persuasiveness, as they passed across Dorchester after they had ambled on for a block in silence.

"You go! Me, I'm going swimming over in Jackson Park, whether there's white men there or not," Alfred said, his face hardening, his voice determined.

"Alfred, you is always courtin' trouble, and just because you want to show off to that no-account mulatto gal . . ."

"What you say nigger?"

"Well, no, I'm sorry Alfred," Booker cringed. "But some day you'll go courtin' trouble, and trouble is just gonna catch right on up with you, and it's gonna say, 'Well, Alfred, you been courtin' me, so here I is with my mind made up to give you plenty of me'."

"Shut up, black boy!" Alfred said curtly.

Booker shook his head with disconsolate wonder. As they passed under the Illinois Central viaduct, Booker again suggested that they go down to Thirty-Ninth Street beach, and Alfred testily told him that Thirty-Ninth Street wasn't a beach at all, just a measly, overcrowded pile of stones. The black man had no beach. But he was aiming to go swimming where he had some space without so many people all around him. He added that if the negro was to go on being afraid of the white man, he was never going to get anywhere, and if the negro wanted more space to swim in, he just had to go and take it. And he had told that to Melinda, and she had laughed at him, but she was not going to laugh at him again. Booker just shook his head sadly from side to side.

Turning by the lake, they passed along the sidewalk which paralleled the waters. Sandy beach ran down from the sidewalk to the shoreline, and people were scattered along it in bathing suits. Down several blocks from them, they could see that the regular beach was crowded. More white people frowned at them, and both of them could sense hate and fear in these furtive, hasty glances. Alfred's lips curled into a surly expression.

Half way down toward the regular beach, at about Sixty-Third Street, Alfred jumped down into the sand, tagged by Booker. He gazed around him, nonchalant, and then removed his trousers. He stood in his bathing suit, tall and impressive, strong, graceful. Booker jittered beside him, hesitating until Alfred, without turning his head, taunted him into haste. Booker removed his trousers and stood skinny beside Alfred whose arms were folded, and whose gaze was sphinx-like on the waters. They heard a gentle and steady rippling against the shore line.

White bathers near them stared in their direction with apprehension. A group of three fellows and two young girls who had been splashing and ducking close to the shore saw them, and immediately came out of the water and walked down a hundred yards to re-enter it. Alfred seemed to wince, and then again, his face became hard and intent. Booker saw various white bathers picking up their bundles and moving away from them, and still afraid of these white men, he hated them.

Alfred trotted gracefully to the shore line and plunged into the water, followed by Booker. They cut outward and Alfred suddenly paddled around and playfully ducked Booker. They again hit outward and Booker, catching his breath and plunging beside his companion, told Alfred that they had made a mistake in coming here where they were two against a mob. Alfred retorted that he was not going to whine and beg the white man of anything. Some black man had to be the first to come, if they wanted to have the right of a place to swim. And he wasn't scared anyway.

"Here is one black boy that's not going to be mobbed," Alfred said.

II

Buddy Coen and his friends emerged from the water laughing, shaking their wet bodies and heads. They found a space of sand within the enclosure of the regular beach and dropped down, hunting for the cigarettes they had hidden.

"Well, boys, I was just going to say, if you lads want to provide the bottle, I'm all set for a bender tonight," Buddy said after lighting a cigarette.

"If you'd go back driving a hack, you'd have dough enough for your own liquor," fat Marty Mulligan said.

"What the hell have I got a wife working as a waitress for? So that I can drive a taxi all night? See any holes in my head, Irish?" Buddy said tauntingly.

"After the fight Buddy started last Saturday night with two dicks, I should think he'd stay sober once in a while and see how it feels," Morris said.

"Say, there's plenty of neat pickups around here, even if most of them are Polacks," the big Swede said.

"Boys, my girl is out of town tonight, and I'm dated up with a married woman I met out on my territory. Her husband works nights, and brother, she's the stuff," Marty bragged, following his statement with an anatomical description of her contours, charms and sexual technique.

The big Swede began talking about the old days, and Marty told anecdotes of how he used to get drunk when he was going to Saint Stanislaus High School. They talked on until suddenly, from a group close to them, they heard a lad say, "There's niggers down a way on the beach."

They became tense, and Buddy asked was that straight stuff.

"Bad enough having Polacks dirtying up the lake without diseased shines," the big Swede said in hate.

"A few weeks ago, a coal black bastard tried to get into the lockers here, but he was told that there weren't any. Then a couple of us boys just talked to him outside, you know, we talked, and used a little persuasion, and he's one black bastard that knows his place, and knows that this is a white man's park, and a white man's beach," Buddy said.

"Say, I just need to sock somebody to make the day exciting and put me in good spirits for my date tonight," Marty Mulligan said.

"Well, then, what the hell are you guys waiting for?" Buddy said, jumping to his feet.

They followed Buddy to the water, swam out around the fencing that extended along the formal beach limits, and walked along the shore line in search of the negroes.

"I know I don't mind pounding a few black bastards full of lumps," Norton said.

"Me, now, I ain't sloughed anybody since Christ knows when, and I need a little practice," Morris said.

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III

"Alfred, I'm tired," Booker said.

"Nigger, shut up. Nobody's going to hurt you," Alfred said.

"Well I is, just the same," Booker said, his voice breaking into a whine.

Ignoring Booker, Alfred turned over on his back and floated with the sun boiling down upon his coppery limbs. Booker paddled after him, afraid to go into shore alone. He turned and looked back along the avenue of sand, filled with so many white people. Blocks and blocks of sand, populated with all those whites. The fears of a mob assailed him. He wished that he had never come. He thought of many negroes who had been lynched in the south, of many who had been beaten and mobbed in the Chicago race riots of 1919. He remembered how, as a boy in those times, he had seen one of his race, dead, hanging livid from a telephone post in an alley. He was afraid, and with his fear was hatred, hatred of the white man, hatred because of the injustices to him, to his race, hatred because he was afraid of the white man.

Again, he glanced along the avenue of sand filled with white men, and each small figure along it was a potential member of a mob to beat him and Alfred. He turned and again looked at his friend who was floating, unconcerned. He wished that he had Alfred's courage. With chattering teeth, he shook his head slowly and sadly, feeling, sensing, knowing that they were going to pay dearly for this venture. He treaded water waiting for Alfred, wishing that he was out of it. He saw a group of white bathers stand at the shore and look out over the water. He had a premonition.

IV

"There they are," Buddy said, curtly nodding his head toward the water, and they saw two kinky heads and two negro faces, diminished by distance.

"Let's drown the bastards!" Morris said.

Buddy said that they would walk off a little way and wait until the two shines came in. They moved a few yards away and waited, tense and eager. Buddy lashed out contemptuous remarks, keeping them on edge, and Marty remarked that they had driven the white man out of Washington Park, and that if things went on, soon the whole south side would be black.

"If they want Jackson Park, they got to fight for it!" Buddy sneered.

"Just think! Look at all these white girls bathing around here. With niggers on the beach, it ain't safe for them," Morris said.

"And do you fellows know, my sister nearly came out here swimming today," Morris said.

They saw the two negroes coming in, and heard the smaller one trying to convince the big one about something, but they could not catch enough of what he said. The two negroes walked slowly toward their small bundles of clothing, their wet bodies glistening in the sunlight. After they had sat down, Buddy arose and led the group toward them. Seeing the white fellows approaching, Booker grabbed his clothes and ran, and four of the white group pursued him, yelling to stop that nigger.

With a sulky expression on his face, Alfred arose as Buddy and Morris approached him.

"The water nice?" Buddy asked his voice constrained and threatening.

"Passable," Alfred answered, his fists clenched.

"Been out here before?" Buddy continued.

"No . . . Why?" Alfred said with unmistakable fearlessness.

A crowd gathered around, and excitement cut through the beach like an electric current because of the shouts and chase after Booker. A white bather tripped him as he ran, and joined the four other pursuers in cursing and punching him, mercilessly disregarding his pleas to be let alone. They dragged him to his feet, knocked him down, kicked him, dragged him up, knocked him over again, while he uttered more shrill and helpless cries.

"Anybody ever tell you that this is a white man's beach?" Morris asked Alfred.

"You know we don't want niggers here," Buddy said.

Buddy went down from a quick and surprising punch on the jaw, and Alfred countered Morris' right sudden swing with a thudding right that snapped the white lad's head back. Buddy sat down, rubbed his jaw, shook his dazed head, leaped to his feet, and went into the negro swinging both hands. While Alfred fought off the two of them, others dragged the howling Booker to the fight scene. The big Swede broke through the crowd of spectators and clipped Alfred viciously on the side of the head. Two other white bathers smashed into the attack. Defending himself, Alfred crashed Morris to the sand, and was then battered off his feet. A heel was brought against his jaw, and as he struggled to rise, five white bodies piled onto him, punching, scratching, using their knees. Spectators shouted and encouraged the white lads, females screamed, and Alfred was quickly and severely punished. Booker opened his mouth to beg for mercy, and a smashing fist brought blood from his lips; another wallop between the eyes toppled him over backwards.

A baldheaded Jewish man with a paunchy stomach protested, and a small, pretty blonde girl screamed hatred at him, calling him a nigger-lover. A middle-aged woman with a reddish bovine face, called in an Irish brogue for the men to hit the black skunks, while a child strained at her waist and shouted.

A park policeman hurriedly shoved through the spectators, and the slugging ceased. The two negroes sat in the sand, both of their faces cut and bleeding. The policeman sneered at them.

"You fellows better go home," he said roughly.

They slowly got up and Booker tried to explain that they had done nothing.

"Don't be giving me any lip," the policeman interrupted. "I said you better go home or do your swimming down at Thirty-Ninth if you don't want to be starting riots. Now move along!"

He shoved Booker.

"And you, too," he said to Alfred who had not moved.

Booker hurriedly put his trousers on and Alfred did likewise slowly, as if with endless patience. They wiped their bleeding faces with dirty handkerchiefs, and Booker sniffled.

"Go ahead now!" the policeman roughly repeated.

"We will," Alfred said, meeting their stares with a swollen and battered face, the left side of his swimming suit torn at the shoulder-strap, exposing his full chest.

"Go ahead!"

"We will, but we'll be back!" Alfred said challengingly.

The crowd slowly dispersed, and the six fellows stood there near the policeman.

"Shall we follow 'em?" asked Marty.

"They ain't worth hitting, the skunks,—and the dirty fighting, kicking me that way!" said Collins, limping.

They turned and walked heroically back toward the beach.

"That bastard had the nerve to hit me," Buddy said, pointing to his swollen eye.

"Like all niggers, they were yellow," said Morris.

"Well, we did a neat job with them," Norton bragged.

"Boy, I caught that big one between his teeth. Look at my hand," Marty said, showing his swollen knuckles.

"Look at that, fellows. There's somethin'. I say there, sisters," the Swede said to three girls who were coquetting on the sand.

Looking covertly at legs and breasts, they leered.

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INTELLECTUALS AND THE SYMPHONY

by JULIAN FUNT

UNTIL the intellectual happened along, music did not know what love was. It had been starving for want of it. All music ever attained was infatuation. This is particularly true of symphonic music. Large orchestras played and conductors wondered whether audiences could see their expressive hands even though their backs were turned, but it was all an empty, loveless affair.

Symphonic music carries with it a challenge (both physical and spiritual, as we shall soon see) and where there is a challenge, the intellectual is not far behind.

Once the intellectuals have arrived, there is no further need for holding up a concert. It has been established that if Carnegie Hall were blown up the night of a Philharmonic concert, the only intellectuals surviving would be the personnel of Goldman's band (kept away by frustration and professional jealousy) and several isolated cosmic minds confined to bed by temporary indisposition.

Appreciation is not merely a mental activity for the intellectual as has been commonly supposed. Too many intellectuals have smugly relied on the misconception that cerebral exhilaration in the appreciation of symphonic music is enough. They have closed their eyes to the importance of coordination between mind and body.

First, it is important to cultivate the stare. This calls for mastery of the delicate shadings of meaning in the simple opening and shutting of the eyes. Of course, it's difficult. But with practise it can be acquired. It is a matter of careful timing and mastery of the art of relaxation. If you can't relax, your stare will be a hollow mockery.

Deftness in the body sprawl cannot be stressed too strongly. Rigidity exposes the intellectual to suspicion; the undisciplined slouch impugns his artistic validity. It's a matter of hard work. At first the best results seem to be attained without the distraction of the music; later it can be tried while some of the lighter symphonic pieces are being played on a phonograph.

And now I believe we are ready for the more subtle aspects of appreciation. These, of course, must follow the concert, never precede it, if there is to be no embarrassment. Let us, therefore, turn to the problem of the sigh.

An intellectual must always be on guard. A simple sigh may be misinterpreted. If it is not properly executed it may mean that the intellectual is glad the concert is over. If it is a very weak sigh, almost expressionless in its weakness, it may mean that the intellectual has missed the point of the concert entirely. No intellectual should under estimate or in any other way pooh-pooh the expressive sigh, the sigh that implies great pity for those who can't grasp the subtleties of symphonic music and at the same time hints of great transcending happiness which comes in those rare moments when intellectuals achieve a spiritual kinship with Beethoven and a blood brotherhood with Werner Janssen or Walter Damrosch.

Then, of course, there is comment. This must always follow but never precede the sigh. It has been said that a good sigh and a good comment after a concert are the infallible ways of determining an intellectual. But this is not as simple as it seems. A comment by an intellectual has to be at once ecstatic and cryptic. All the world waits for the comment of an intellectual. The comment must be brief, rapturous, profound and crushing.

There is a simple pattern of accepted comment for the intellectual. And it admits of no variations. All an intellectual has to say is, "Ah, Toscanini" in that special detached way. If he says more, he is lost. If he says less, he is floundering. It is the only way to make clear the fact that orchestral music is not orchestral music without Toscanini.

Very often a cynic will rush an intellectual to a concert without warning and time their arrival so that they are at the concert hall after the first number on the program has begun. Thus, the two of them—the cynic and the intellectual—will have to wait in the hall and listen to the orchestra without seeing a program or the conductor.

"Can you tell who is conducting?" the cynic will ask slyly. Intellectuals should beware of walking into a trap. "Not Toscanini" should be the answer without a moment's hesitation. And if it should turn out to be none other than Toscanini, the explanation should be, "Oh, he's not himself today."

Musical appreciation is not what it used to be. Once only intellectuals came to a concert, and though there were large deficits at the end of the year, there was great deal of spiritual satisfaction, both for the orchestra and the audience. Alas, this does not exist today. Unfortunately, the intellectuals did not have the concerts to themselves for long. The general public began to attend en masse. Serious efforts were made to discourage the masses, but without effect. Despite the combined efforts of the intellectuals, the members of the orchestra, the men in the box office, and the ushers who tried to be their most churlish selves, the masses were not discouraged. In Philadelphia the intellectuals even secured the cooperation of Mr. Stokowski, who made biting scornful speeches, but all to no avail.

The Philistines had come to stay. And it is for this reason that the intellectuals have built for themselves a severe code of manners and ethics of symphony appreciation. Certainly they will not give up the enjoyment of the symphony. Following the rules, therefore, becomes most important, otherwise intellectuals will find the wrong people talking to them during intermissions and their own friends cutting them. They have no other choice.

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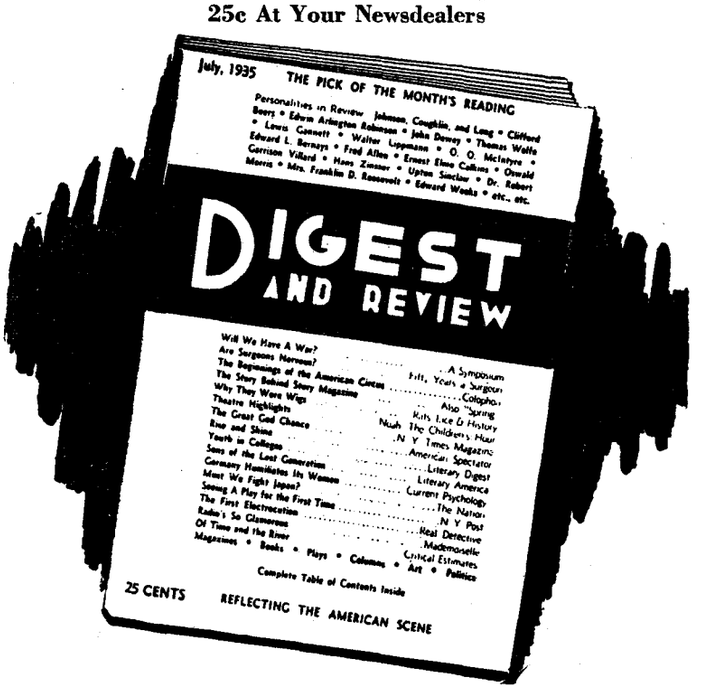

THE SADDEST PERFORMANCE OF THE YEAR
Tallulah Bankhead

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FUGUE

by WALDO FRANK

(Continued from page 2)

for an answer. "Nothing else, I thank you." —I can bear nothing else. Except the end. Yes, now I know I can bear the end, because I can bear nothing else!

She has stepped back against the other table, but with her face so turned that she can feel his eyes, and the hard top of the table makes her feel her own body. — He sees me!

"Nothing else," half-aloud he murmurs. — I'm out, already. What a strange ease. Eased out, after thirty years of living. Living thirty years to know I cannot go on living. Mildred helped me know. Even if she'd have me now, it's too late. Mildred is life, and has made me know I cannot live. This place makes me know. Cheap eating joint . . . lived thirty years and never been in one before. The eggs . . . if I don't touch 'em, won't she think it strange? And if she does?

— He sees me! His eyes tell me. But he's scared.

— I'm going home. I know what I'm going to do when I am home. Oh, the good knowing at last what I am going to do! Mildred could not give this joy to me, except by driving me out. If you accepted me now, Mildred, how would I know what I was going to do?

— A swell guy. And has he had the blues! You ain't unhappy now. His eyes tell me.

— Out, brief candle. Snuffed with a noisy . . . I'll not hear the noise. Simson will hear it. The noise and the mess for him. Well, he'll be paid for it. Simson, you money-lover, just for a day or two you'll be thinking what a good place you've lost with plenty pickings; and you'll hate me for dying. Wait till they read my will. How you'll love me then! Simson, how your heart will melt for me. Damn glad I'm dead, and mourning. I must have one mourner. Mother's too full of pride for sorrow. Mildred'll say: "Are people going to suspect, and blame *me?*" Simson will be my mourner. One I can be sure of. Paid for.

The table top against her thigh was heavy and hurt her. — Whad'ya know about him? Maybe the kid's on'y drunk. Maybe he won't even remember. Please, God, don't let him be drunk!

— It's rather right that my last food be served to me in such a place. So I cannot touch it.

— But what's he doin' here? Why don't he eat his eggs? Did he lamp me in the winder, and is that why he come? He ain't hungry. Hungry fer me? She sees the swell guy in the window seeing her as she leans, gracefully serving. — His face out there, he sees me, he stops, he stares. I don't see him. I ain't thinkin' o' no man. Clean thoughts. He knows that, lookin' at my face! And a sadness from me goin' out to him t'rough de plate-glass winder . . . He don't know what to do. Git along? Turn back? *He's here, don't worry!* This ain't his sort of a dump. *But he's here.* He looks at me, and he can't git away. He opens the door . . . The table top is pressing, hurting, she does not know it.

— All clear. Get out, then. And the eggs are cold.

— He's too scared to talk. The foist time. He'll be back; and then he'll say, he'll say what I am dreamin'. Thank Gawd fer the night shift. Them swells sleep all day. Ten more nights I'm on it. He'll come back before. Oh, he'll come back before!

— A decent tip to the wench would be more than the bill.

— Maybe he's too scared to come back. Gawd, what've I ever asked ya before? Please let him come back. I could speak to him now. Slow, kid! He don't know what y' are. What sort of a girl does he t'ink works in this sort of a dump?

— I'll slip her quarter under the plate. Now home! Now the end. What people! That trencherman chauffeur. So this is where they eat? How can they have an appetite trundling dead decencies from address to address? Get up. Is it so hard to leave? This styx of lard and sweat . . . this is the guts of the world. Good place for my exit.

The young man arose and reached, tall and suddenly frail, for his silk hat. He glanced past the girl, whose cheeks were pale, while all he saw was the door into the street's obscene commotion . . . the door toward the chastity of death.

Sylvia rides from her room to work. She has come through a night too dawning with hope for much sleep. She has listened to night reasons against hope; yet the sun rises! — Gawd, my whole body's livin' wid him, my whole breath is singin', my heart beats on'y de news, de news of his comin' back!

In the subway car the men and women clutter up the world between Sylvia and the moment when her man will come again from the street, and inside the door, and will speak. *"Little girl, you got me!"* Bright she is, and spring-like, against the dead indifference of the men and women in the subway car. They hold her in the car, they hold her back from making the leap of time into his arms. Beyond them, beyond the train, beyond Sylvia, there he is already, *and she is,* and the moment when he speaks.

—Better read the News. That'll help pass the time. She reads his face in every face before her, a palimpsest of his glowing eyes glowing for her, within the indifferent faces of the men and women. (— What could it be but love?) "Oh, I've waited for you, boy!" All the night she has said it and said it. When the real time comes, what'll there be left to say? — *Stop it.* "I kep' myself clean waitin' fer you." — *Stop it. Read.* "How didya happen to look in just that winder?" *Stop. Read the News.* "Hard to speak, boy? But didn't ya know I'd listen just because I never listened to no one, no one before an' no one ever after!" — *Read! Ferget it!* **(Giants win . . . Show girl . . . Young millionaire)** . . . "I knew it was you, I knew at once it was you who I'd been waitin' . . . " **(Young millionaire . . .)** "And boy, do you know what? I was scared stiff you'd come back de wrong hour." **(Shoots self.)** "Gawd, was I glad I had still ten nights of the night shift." — *Read, I tell you!* "Dat give you ten nights, see? to come back in." **(Giants . . . Crack Safe . . .)** "Ten nights, honey." — How can I wait one? **(Young millionaire shoots self . . .)** — Tonight he will come, tonight he will speak, and tonight . . . and tonight . . .

A PLEA FOR INDECENCY

by LOUIS PAUL

(Continued from page 2)

has slapped the man's face who offered it to her. An idiotic state of affairs. And now they try the burlesquers for promoting lechery when what they actually accomplish is probably a kind of homey instruction.

I've had in mind for some time now a fiction story which told the commonplace tale of, let us say, Nellie, the stenog. Nellie would be a good girl. Oh, human, of course. She would inevitably compare young Louie's manner of approach with Clark Gable's, to Louie's disadvantage and dismay. Eddie's neck would have a suggestion of the cut of Franchot Tone's, but Nellie doesn't like the way Eddie calls all girls "broads." Franchot Tone never calls girls "broads." Nellie isn't sure just what it means, but it doesn't sound so good. She's sweet on Bill, who isn't such a good looker but who has a swell job as head

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superintendent of a scavenger concern. Bill, however, is saving up to buy a motor boat and never mentions marriage. The girls in Nellie's office had a mimeographed paper which Angie found in her kid brother's pants pocket while looking for a stray quarter. This was a monograph, written in understandable if somewhat over-ripe prose, entitled "Confessions of a French Model," and consisted of the Sapphic love adventures of a fantastic female Paul Bunyan of the boudoir.

The story would go on to relate how Nellie read the paper over Louise's shoulder, and giggled at the part where the French Model hides the fat man's pants. Many references, unfortunately, are obscure. Some time later Nellie goes to a burlesque show just for the hell of it with Eddie, who has get-up but faltering approach. She's sorry for the plump matron who hops about in a veil, as Eddie explains that she has to do all that hopping for seventeen bucks a week. Two days later Nellie's firm puts on a new bookkeeper. He's got a neck like Franchot Tone, *and does not say "broad."* Soon they are married. About eighteen months after the ceremony Nellie has a baby. Well, it's a good story, and has the ring of truth. It might stand movie treatment, but they wouldn't touch it with a ten foot pole. The reformers'd be down on their tail. The office scene where the girls giggle over a French model's confessions would be definitely out. The burlesque wouldn't do—sordid realism. Such a story might send the youth of America into lecherous hysteria.

As a writer I have tried to learn, humbly, all that any one man's cumulative experience can teach him. I've seen impressionist plays and I've been inside of prisons; I've sailed on crummy boats and worn a tuxedo; I've bummed around on freights and studied sharply the prose of Oscar Wilde; I've read Tolstoi in translation and am married ten years; I've talked with some queer specimens of humanity, I've sat in expensive audiences, and I've gone out purposely looking for the startling, the unique, and the unbelievable. But I have never seen an American youth come away from contact with a piece of obscenity in the throes of lecherous hysteria. This does not mean that obscenity couldn't do it. There are some funny guys in the world whom I don't know. But if I haven't seen it done, then neither has any reformer nor minister. Ergo, he has no ground whatever upon which to base his vile and putrid accusations, except the flimsy sophism that he himself has lecherous hysteria whenever he sees an innocuous nude or goes to witness a Lowell Thomas travelogue or visits the museum or reads *La Vie Parisienne*. The sophism is amply demonstrated by the fact that he does not enjoy lecherous hysteria, thus divorcing himself from the normal segment of humanity. It is just too much to ask that morality be based on the reactions of weak-minded reformers and anacephalic imbeciles.

Away with these clowns, gentlemen. Imagine in your hand a good sound glassful of ripe Bourbon. Shall we rise? To reason and sanity, and a goodly measure of fine rousing indecency. And a little epilogue after the toast? But of course. I am reminded of the lecherous scoundrelly old boozehound who, after dissipating in ruinous fashion year after year, so swiftly played out his capacity to sin that, at the age of 107, he just wasn't worth a damn. It proves, probably, that indecency has its weak point. But tell me if you've heard of a reformer of that age. He'd have bored himself to death long before that.

Subscribers to The American Spectator will have their subscriptions extended two months to compensate for the April and May, 1935 issues, which were skipped.

RULE, BRITANNIA

by THEODORE PRATT

WHEN I presented a check, to be cashed in English pounds, at the New York branch of a great London bank, the young British teller examined it crisply, examined me. Crisper were the Bank of England notes handed to me. But when I counted them I found that England had paid me a whole pound, nearly five dollars, too much.

I pointed it out to the teller and he stared at me, unbelievably. If he had been crisp before, he was stiff now. "The amount paid to you, sir, is quite correct."

I had been sure it wasn't. To check up again and show him, I counted the money out on his counter. There was still an excess pound note. It crackled there between us, offering an opportunity for Anglo-American amity. But for the teller it didn't seem to exist.

"I beg your pardon," he insisted, "but the amount is correct."

I wondered if this was some quizzical generosity on the part of the British lion. Was it an ironical gesture to give Shylock an extra pound of flesh? Was besieged Troy once again throwing loaves of bread over its embattled walls?

I pushed the note over to him. He pushed it gently back.

"This bank does not make mistakes, sir," he said.

I told him not to be foolish, that everybody at one time or another makes mistakes. I tried once more to get him to take back the money.

He put it this time firmly into my hands. "The bank is not permitted to make mistakes," he said. Then, in a lowered, different voice that could not possibly carry to people near by, he added: "I should be glad to meet you any place you say after bank hours, sir."

At first I didn't understand. But when I looked at his face again, I did.

England had made a mistake after all. It wouldn't recognize it officially, but nevertheless the fact remained that the British lion had erred. It would be worth the teller's job to admit it in a formal transaction. To keep it a secret he was ready to stand the loss from his own pocket unless it could be arranged outside the bank.

I met the opportunity to uphold England's integrity by whispering my address. But as I left the solid institution I couldn't resist humming a national anthem having to do with God saving the King.

DYING IS DULL

by M. C. BLACKMAN

IN A dozen years of newspaper reporting I have witnessed a score of legal executions, and my critical conclusion is that such trysts with Death are, from the standpoint of the spectator, disappointing drama.

In fact, the execution of a human being is a pretty dull affair to watch. There are exceptions, of course, but the average electrocution or hanging lacks the dramatic qualities that stir the emotions and lift the observer to heights far above normalcy.

I once wrote for *transition* an impressionistic sketch—it was intelligible to such an old-fashioned extent that it was almost rejected by the editors—entitled "An I for an I," in which an overwrought witness of an electrocution so closely identified himself with the doomed man that he experienced the agonies of death and was shocked to discover himself alive after the switch was thrown.

Now, in so far as that piece pretended to reflect my own experiences, it was dishonest. I have never felt such emotions while watch-

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ing the taking of a life by the state. It is possible, I suppose, to hypnotize oneself into a "state of mind," by repeating:

"My God, that man is alive and in a few minutes he will be dead. I am watching the transformation of a miraculous Something into a horrible Nothing."

But the scene itself in the death chamber is a flat anti-climax. The victim usually is past all emotion and is incapable of arousing any definite emotion in the observer by merely sitting in a chair and quivering convulsively a moment or two while passing from life to death. There is too little visible change. Death comes too quietly.

The first execution I ever witnessed was the hanging of a Negro in a state which required the sheriffs to serve as executioners. The event was to take place at noon, and my city editor, in giving me the assignment, gravely cautioned me to sleep well and eat a light breakfast before the ordeal. He may have been ribbing me; I was the cub of the staff.

At any rate I followed instructions and took the suggestion regarding breakfast so literally that, as I waited for the zero hour, my principal sensation was one of gnawing hunger.

The thing that impressed me most about that hanging was the fact that when the condemned man came out of his cell for the walk to the scaffold he was contemplatively chewing a match. I don't suppose he was aware that the match was between his teeth, but he kept it there and chewed it slowly until the sheriff removed it as he slipped the black hood over the black face.

The sheriff had to remove the match because he had already tied the doomed man's hands behind his back before he noticed the match. It was in the way of the hood, so he reached up gently, took it away and dropped it on the floor of the trap.

I searched the Negro's face for an identifiable expression, but detected none. He did not show fear, nor despair, nor hope. Those emotions, I guessed, had spent themselves in the hours of waiting. On the other hand, he was not placid, he was not eager, he was not visibly excited.

He was just a docile Negro facing the unwelcome attentions of a group of white men and the somewhat embarrassing solicitude of a black parson. His presence there was not of his own choosing and it was not to his liking, but he was resigned to the unhappy circumstance.

Before enveloping the kinky head in the black cowl, the sheriff asked the doomed man if he wanted to say anything. The Negro took a deep breath, mumbled something unintelligible, gave up the attempt, and shook his head.

The sheriff drew the dark hood, lowered the noose, adjusted the plump knot at one side so that it would snap the neck at the end of the fall, looked around quickly to see that everything was in order, and kicked the trigger that released the trap.

The trap opened to the floor below the death chamber of the jail. The Negro plunged through the opening, reached the end of the rope's length, snapped back a foot or two, swung to and fro a minute or two and was still.

That was all. He was dead, but the plunge to death didn't look any more horrifying than a football player being thrown ten feet to the gridiron sod. The witnesses knew the condemned man was dead, but it was their reason that told them that, not the happening before their eyes.

I felt cheated.

It can be readily understood that a hanging, which requires abrupt physical movement of the victim, is marked by far more action than an electrocution, which demands nothing of the doomed man except that he sit in a chair.

All of the electric chair deaths I have witnessed have been uniformly unexciting, but seven of them stand out in my memory, six of them because they occurred within eight days—four Negroes one Friday and two white men the next—and the seventh because of a pathetic circumstance.

The man who aroused my compassion was a murderer, a white man who had killed in the excitement of an amateurish robbery. He was as friendly as a puppy and as eager for kindly attention. During his long stay in the death cell he became friendly with Joe, a police reporter, who was a sympathetic listener. Joe and I covered his execution together.

When this man came to die, he walked steadily into the death chamber and sat in the electric chair. He looked expectantly at the faces of those crowded against the iron railing in the tiny room. His look of expectancy changed to anxiety, and his eyes eagerly searched each face.

He was looking for one familiar, friendly face in that crowd. The witnesses were not hostile toward him, but they were strangers, curious but indifferent . . . Finally, he saw Joe. A light came into his eyes. He half rose in the chair and waved one hand high.

"Good-bye, Joe," he said. "Good-bye. Good-bye!"

Then he relaxed in the chair, content, and waited without visible agitation for the straps, the mask, the death-dealing current . . . Joe couldn't stand it; he bolted from the room.

Compared to Joe, I was an amateur witness of executions. He "collected" them, as a boy collects stamps, until a series of incidents such as the one described began to disturb his phlegmatic Dutch defense against emotion. His work necessitated a too close, intimate contact with the poor devils in Death Row.

There was one old man who balked at the chair until Joe appeared. When Joe pushed forward, the old fellow exclaimed triumphantly:

"There's Joe now. I knew he'd come. He promised me he would. Thanks, Joe. Good luck."

The real drama occurs in the death cell before the last walk. There the principal plays a role that cannot fail to stir even the most hardened observer. There you see hope give way to despair and hope born again. You see weakness and strength of character manifested in dozens of ways. You see ugliness and beauty of men's souls. You see remorse and defiance, pathos and babbling bathos. You see religious frenzy and astonishing stoicism. Sometimes you even see comedy.

Doomed men, when the crucial hour comes, seem to withdraw into a shell of apathy that makes them impervious to all that goes on around them. It is fortunate for them and for the officials charged with their execution that this is so.

My friend, Joe, tells of a particularly unpleasant quadruple execution accompanied by dreadful drama behind the scenes.

Preparations for this unusual execution were not as complete as they might have been. There were no accommodations for the undertaker who was to take the four bodies away; the death chamber was too small for four coffins and the augmented crowd of witnesses, and there was no other room convenient.

So it came about that the four coffins were deposited in the "run-around" of the death house, directly in front of the cells in which the four men were confined. If the doomed men looked through the doors of their cells, the grim row of coffins was directly in view. If they looked out the windows, they could see the hearse waiting to carry them away after the executions.

The Editors, resenting the charge that Congress consists of a bunch of deadheads, offer a recent incident as eloquent rebuttal. According to the Washington representative of the New York Times *who is also a specialist in acoustics, objections to the proposal of Representative Mitchell of Tennessee that Congressmen be prohibited from putting members of their immediate families or relatives on the legislative payroll "came in such a roar that reporters who were out of the chamber at the time came scurrying into the press gallery in amazement."*

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But they didn't look up. They remained in their shells and were unaware of the macabre stage properties around them.

Two of the men were brothers. One was the first of the four to go. His body was brought back and deposited in one of the coffins. The other brother was second, and as he went to his death he had to walk past the row of coffins, one of which contained all that remained of his brother . . . He apparently did not see them at all.

While the third man was in the chair, the undertaker's assistants were engaged in carrying out the first two coffins. They had not returned when it became necessary to remove the body of the third victim from the chair.

"I offered to help," Joe relates. "We placed the body in the coffin and the undertaker was preparing to replace the lid, when I heard him gasp and saw him turn pale."

" 'My God!' he whispered. 'Look!'

"I looked, and the figure in the casket stirred and breathed.

"We called the warden, and the guards carried the limp figure back to the electric chair, strapped it in, and the electrician administered the current for five minutes more. The electrician, who took pride in his work, was terribly embarrassed."

All of this transpired within plain view of the fourth victim, but he did not once look up, nor indicate that he was at all aware of what was going on.

The most dramatic execution I ever covered was a hanging in Canada which, paradoxically, I was not permitted to witness. The event took place in the county prison at London, in the Province of Ontario, and I drew the assignment from the city editor of a Detroit paper for which I worked.

Now, the Canadians are understandably scornful of American methods of dealing with criminals, and they despise American journalism, particularly the sensational brand I represented. The high sheriff said "No" very flatly to my request for permission to witness the hanging, and he warned me that if I even approached the gray stone prison on the bank of the little river Thames, I would find myself inside looking out in very short order.

I believed him, but I had to have a story, if I wanted to go back to my job. American city editors, safe at their desks, can't be intimidated by Canadian high sheriffs. Better to fake a story and take my chances on exposure than to admit I was unable to crash into a mere prison!

Still, faking is distasteful and hostility a challenge to the average newspaper man, so I set about devising a plan for circumventing the high sheriff. My first step was to enlist the aid of a London free-lance writer who was friendly with the city constabulary. He could do nothing about getting me into the county prison, but he thought he could arrange for me to peek at the death scene!

The city police headquarters and jail were in a four-story building diagonally cross the block from the county prison and overlooking the latter's jailyard, where the execution was to take place. My Canadian friend connived with the city police to admit me to the roof of this building shortly before midnight, when the hanging was scheduled to take place.

Alas, the county authorities had anticipated Peeping Toms on the roof of the city building. The scaffold was curtained on three sides with burlap, effectively screening the platform from our view. However, the roof seemed the nearest I could approach my assignment, so I stayed there. I saw a sight I shan't soon forget.

The open side of the scaffold faced the near east wall of the prison yard. The single light on the platform was so placed that it projected the shadows of the actors in this drama clearly upon the gray stone wall.

I realized this when, a minute after midnight, a single shadow appeared upon the stone-wall screen. It was a short, stocky, very busy figure. That would be the hangman.

Then came another and slighter figure, a uniformed shadow on either side. The doomed man and his guards. The slight shadow swayed a little, back and forth slowly, the head bowed.

A dark object descended, enveloped the bowed head, giving the central figure in this shadowy scene a weird, gnome-like appearance. Directly above this apparition dangled the noose. With a quick motion the hangman adjusted the noose around the cowled head. The sturdy figure of the chaplain appeared on the scene and was etched in shadow, his hand raised in benediction and supplication.

It was like something from a German film. The shadows on the brick wall, thrice enlarged but clear-cut, moved in absolute silence and suggested the presence of Death far more strongly than a direct view of the scene could have done.

The tableau of the victim, the hangman and the clergyman was held for a moment. Then the chaplain stepped back, the hangman moved quickly, and the scene blurred for an instant. Now!

Across the tomblike stillness of the jail yard came the queer, sickening clatter of a wooden trap sprung, then the muffled thump of a heavy object jerked short at the end of a rope.

That was all. The prison yard was as quiet as before. The figure I knew was dangling below the platform was out of focus; its shadow did not reach the stone-wall screen. The other shadows vanished. Presently the light went out.

I thanked my Canadian friend sincerely. At last I had seen a dramatic execution.

JEEBY-MILL

by HENRY MORTON ROBINSON

IT isn't Tin Pan Alley or a College of Acrobats; it isn't a zoo, and it isn't the Psychopathic Ward at Bellevue; it's a combination of all these, whirling around like a gilt-cracked carousel at an upstate county fair. And it's all housed under one gas-tight roof, a kind of hangar that keeps a thousand or more unballasted human balloons from going straight up into the clouds to kiss *Meshugga** and her constellations seven. Oh, there may be crazier buildings in the world, but this one is dizzy enough for me. The rational mortar that holds other buildings together, the common-sense underpinning that keeps them from collapsing into an abyss of utter madness, is completely lacking in this edifice. True, it looks like an office building, and has all the necessary appurtenances of one—elevators, mail-chutes, and a cigar stand in the corridor—but these, I have come to believe, are merely stage properties, dramatic furniture put in to intensify the staring insanity of what goes on there.

The building has a name, a street number and a good location, all of which we'll disclose as nearly as the law of libel allows. Suppose we call it the Theatrical Enterprises Building, and reveal that it stands on Broadway, at a point where that protean thoroughfare incandesces into Times Square. Eleven or twelve stories in height, it is constructed of a yellowish fire-brick, as sane and respectable as anything around it. There are three elevators in the main lobby, and one or two of them actually run. Honest, you wouldn't suspect, from anything that meets the unpeeled eye, that you were entering a *Maison de goof*, a loony-bin, a high-tension jeeby-mill in which every last nut is loose and all the wheels spin on eccentric axles.

Your first suspicion that all is not quite intelligent occurs when you begin to look for someone you're looking for. Let's suppose you want to find a man named Morey Pearl, and that he's a big fountain pen wielder for The Amalgamated Theatre-Booking Corporation of North America. You want to inquire of this man Pearl

*Omitted in some zodiacs, *Meshugga* is really the ancient goddess of the theatre, and still holds powerful sway over the inmates of the Jeeby-Mill.

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just how much it would cost you to engage a troupe of midget bagpipers for an indoor Caledonian picnic. (It *could* happen; that's how I got into the place.) You begin by locating Mr. Pearl's name and office number on the directory board in the corridor. Ah, there it is: Morey Pearl, Independent Showmen, Inc., (h'm, he's in a different corporation already) Room 304. Well, anyway, it must be the same guy, so you go to Room 304 and after reading the names painted on the door you find that the office is not occupied by Mr. Pearl at all, but by Moe Maltz, P. X. (Professor of Xylophone); The International Popcorn Vending-Machine Co.; Gaetano Bonzaninni, formerly of the Bologna Opera-Casting Studios; and a man named Twombly. There is one desk and no window in the office, which is fully ⅔ as large and ⅓ as brilliantly lighted as a subway lavatory. As you enter, four people grab for the telephone and try to get in touch with Alfred Lunt, Walter Huston, Jed Harris, Charlie MacArthur, Ben Hecht and Jimmie Durante. When this little by-play subsides, you seek a trace of Morey Pearl. No one knows him, no one ever heard of him. Your conviction that M. Pearl is merely a figment of fancy, a nebulous Perseid of the theatre, impalpable, elusive, rare, grows stronger as you rove through the building calling his name. Fearfully be-rouged girls are tap-dancing all around you; the whinny of a horse reveals that an equestrian troupe is rehearsing in Room 12 B (which for some obscure reason is sandwiched in between Suite 672 and The Superintendent's office); the dying fall of massive dumb-bells denotes that the weight-lifting Karagousians are *not* selling their act to the pock-marked impresario from Wilkes-Barre. At last, quite without expectancy or logic, you come upon Morey Pearl in Room 888 begging a rude fellow in overalls not to take away the telephone till the Four Marx Brothers sign up with the Pearl Interests for 50 weeks on RKO. Look mister, the contracts are *practically* signed. But the telephone man starts to cut the wires anyway. At this point Mr. Pearl discovers who you are and what you want. "Midget bag-pipers? Sure I got midget bag-pipers, or better yet, I'll give you a refined yodelling duo, dreck from the Elps. No, alright then it's midget bag-pipers. So Mr. Pearl extracts a six-dollar advance from you on the musical-midget deal, pays the telephone arrears, and then ascends in a manic flight to the uttermost ceiling of megalomania, seeking the goddess Meshugga that he may smack her gratefully on her juicy, abundant mouth. In a five-minute overture on the perpendicular pronoun he becomes a Maestro of Hallucinations, a combination of Ziegfeld, Barnum, Ringlink Brodders, and Oscar Hammerstein III. Why, those guys were *schlemiels* compared with Morey Pearl, King of Modern Showmen, the Jeeby-Mill Booking Agent who has just paid his telephone bill! . . . . If Gatti-Casazza has trouble with the Opera House, so whose fault is it? Didn't I tell him, confidential, what he needed was divink girls. . . . Say, mister, it's going to cost plenty busfare to bring those midgets in from Union City, New Jersey. . . . Why not take the yodellers yet, they live right on 10th Avenue? . . ."

And what about the entertainers themselves, hanging around day after day in search of a job? They too are mad (mad with hope and delusion)—ham-and-eggers mostly, relics of the old days when vaudeville raced the movies neck and neck for audience favor. They show you faded yellow clippings of their triumph in the Bijou Dream Theatre, Lewiston, Maine, 1923, and they solemnly assure you that they are just about to sign up for twenty solid weeks.

Mingled with these broken-down hoofers of both sexes is a scattering of young girls, would-be Follies' beauties, who will end up, if they are lucky, by getting shipped out as "hostesses" to some provincial roadhouse—for their board, room and $9 a week. That's if they're lucky, mind you. If they don't get breaks—well, it makes an old sentimentalist just too sad to think what finally becomes of them.

I had hoped that the Jeeby-Mill was all a nightmare, and that there was no such place, ever, anywhere. Then I met T. B. Burns in the offices of the Ballyhoo Associates, and realized how fantastic the dream could actually be. The Ballyhoo Associates is a mammoth, stupendous, death-defying and otherwise breath-taking organization—and Mr. Burns is its only President, Treasurer and General Manager. From his headquarters in the Jeeby-Mill he controls the cockroach racing industry, and also handles a superior line of weasels, penguins, racing terrapin, and boudoir-sized monkeys. There is practically no entertainment problem that Mr. Burns has not solved for his clients: he rents out baboons to people who are lonely (monkeys are much more sociable, and affectionate than dogs, he claims) and will send you up a mongoose or two if you are troubled by rodents. But his real passion is cockroach racing, and if you can pay his price—35 cents a head—he will ship you an entertaining bevy of blooded racers, delivery charges collect.

Seated on a packing box in his office (overlooking the elevator shaft) Mr. Burns expatiates on the charm and gameness of his favorite animal. "The Roach," he says, "will outrun any six, eight or ten-legged creature in the world. In a five-yard dash it is invincible; when a roach gets beaten at this distance, another roach has to do it. Now that's where my breed comes in. By selection and judicious crossing of strains (not too much in-breeding, mind you) I have developed a racer that will spot the finest imported varieties six inches and still beat them to the wire. The best people are racing my animals in their apartments; a polished floor makes a very fast track. Just now business is a bit dull, but when the winter season opens I expect to be cleaned out." Mr. Burns did not say by whom.

As I walked down the stairs of the Jeeby-Mill (the bells on the elevator doors didn't seem to be working) I found myself wondering who paid for heat, light and taxes on this weird building. Perhaps there are enough rent-paying inmates to make the thing self-supporting. I *did* see a man (through a crack-paned door) initiating a class of bohunks into the art of Oriental Massage and the Spinal Yogi Business. Maybe they give him money for it—such things aren't picked up just by reading a couple of magazine articles. But after casting up the Jeeby-Mill's budget—figuring amortization, insurance, and wear-and-tear on telephone cords that get ripped out when Barrymore won't accept a straight business proposition, I've come to a fairly sound conclusion about who pays for Jeeby-Mill—and why. Of course I'll never be sure about this, but somehow I have a secret hunch that the State of New York foots the Jeeby-Mill deficit, or maybe pays the whole bill, in order to take part of the strain off our already overcrowded insane asylums.

WHAT EVER BECAME OF —?

Max Eastman, an essayist *Conrad Aiken, a poet*

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Floyd Dell, a novelist *Gerhart Hauptmann, a playwright*

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